

role as Area Manager, Ruedy will manage over 50 Parson's employees in Northern and Southern Nevada and will oversee the road and highway projects in Nevada, Utah, and Idaho.

Upon graduation from the University of Nevada, Reno in 1981, Ruedy began work for NDOT's Bridge Section where he worked for nine years. He then moved on to a position as the Assistant Materials Engineer to gain more experience in the field. In 1998, Ruedy was promoted to the position of chief construction engineer. He was again promoted in 1999 to become the assistant director for operations, and in 2004, Ruedy became the Assistant Director for Engineering. After serving NDOT for over 25 years, Ruedy is apprehensive about his career change, but he is looking forward to the new challenges and opportunities that await him at the Parson Transportation Group.

Over the years Ruedy has led a number of special projects including: streamlining NDOT's in-house National Environmental Policy Act process, scheduling and tracking system for NDOT's in-house projects, developing Disputer Resolution Boards, and developing the initial bridge seismic retrofit program for NDOT.

Ruedy and his family have raised funds for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, and have visited my office during their efforts. Ruedy loves to run and bike, but his favorite activity is spending time with his wife, Allyson, and their sons, Eric, who is 13, and Matthew, who is 10.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Ruedy Edgington on the floor of the House. I commend him for his tremendous efforts for the state of Nevada, as well as his efforts to fight against Juvenile Diabetes.

PLAYING POLITICS WITH IRAQ

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit to the record an opinion editorial from the June 26, New York Times entitled "Playing Politics with Iraq" by Bob Herbert in which the columnist alleges by giving the public what it wants, an orderly withdrawal from Iraq, the Bush administration is seeking political advantage from the conflict in Iraq, making the war part of a campaign strategy.

The post-war occupation of Iraq has not gone smoothly. This has had considerable influence on the approval rating of President Bush and the popularity of his policies. As such, the Bush Administration and Republican Congressional leadership seeks to turn the debate over the Iraq War in their favor. Their plan is to possibly reduce the number of troops in Iraq before this fall's Congressional elections, with possibly even bigger cuts before the 2008 elections. Yet even while the Bush Administration appears to be executing a withdrawal of a significant number of U.S. troops in the coming month its Republican allies in the Congress are relentlessly claiming that anyone who proposes a withdrawal of troops to be proponents of a "cut and run" appeasement. Is the President and his administration to be accused of "cut and run"?

The Bush White House and Republican Congressional leadership are playing politics

with Iraq. More than 2,500 American troops who answered the call to wage war in Iraq have already perished and thousands more are struggling with coming to terms with the emotional trauma and anguish as a result of their sacrifice. They deserve better, and we owe it to them to do better. We need to move beyond partisan politics because they only serve to deviate us from our main goal—the establishment of a safe and democratic Iraq state.

As a War veteran, I know from experience how sound policy can lessen the damaging effect a war like Iraq can have on the individual. I do not think the Iraq War should be part of any party's campaign strategy. Mr. Speaker I call upon the Republican Congressional Leadership to end this divisive practice of using the Iraq war for political gain or advantage.

[From the New York Times, June 26, 2006]

PLAYING POLITICS WITH IRAQ

(By Bob Herbert)

If hell didn't exist, we'd have to invent it. We'd need a place to send the public officials who are playing politics with the lives of the men and women sent off to fight George W. Bush's calamitous war in Iraq.

The administration and its allies have been mercilessly bashing Democrats who argued that the U.S. should begin developing a timetable for the withdrawal of American forces. Republicans stood up on the Senate floor last week, one after another, to chant like cultists from the Karl Rove playbook: We're tough. You're not. Cut-and-run. Nyah-nyah-nyah!

"Withdrawal is not an option," declared the Senate majority leader, Bill Frist, who sounded like an actor trying on personas that ranged from Barry Goldwater to General Patton. "Surrender," said the bellicose Mr. Frist, "is not a solution."

Any talk about bringing home the troops, in the Senate majority leader's view, was "dangerous, reckless and shameful."

But then on Sunday we learned that the president's own point man in Iraq, Gen. George Casey, had fashioned the very thing that ol' blood-and-guts Frist and his C-Span brigade had ranted against: a withdrawal plan.

Are Karl Rove and his liege lord, the bait-and-switch king, trying to have it both ways? You bet. And that ought to be a crime, because there are real lives at stake.

The first significant cut under General Casey's plan, according to an article by Michael Gordon in yesterday's Times, would occur in September. That, of course, would be perfect timing for Republicans campaigning for reelection in November. How's that for a coincidence?

As Mr. Gordon wrote: "If executed, the plan could have considerable political significance. The first reductions would take place before this fall's Congressional elections, while even bigger cuts might come before the 2008 presidential election."

The general's proposal does not call for a complete withdrawal of American troops, and it makes clear that any withdrawals are contingent on progress in the war (which is going horribly at the moment) and improvements in the quality of the fledgling Iraqi government and its security forces.

The one thing you can be sure of is that the administration will milk as much political advantage as it can from this vague and open-ended proposal. If the election is looking ugly for the G.O.P., a certain number of troops will find themselves waking up state-side instead of in the desert in September and October.

I wonder whether Americans will ever become fed up with the loathsome politicking,

the fear-mongering, the dissembling and the gruesome incompetence of this crowd. From the Bush-Rove perspective, General Casey's plan is not a serious strategic proposal. It's a straw in the political wind.

How many casualties will be enough? More than 2,500 American troops who dutifully answered President Bush's call to wage war in Iraq have already perished, and thousands more are struggling in agony with bodies that have been torn or blown apart and psyches that have been permanently wounded.

Has the war been worth their sacrifice?

How many still have to die before we reach a consensus that we've overpaid for Mr. Bush's mad adventure? Will 5,000 American deaths be enough? Ten thousand?

The killing continued unabated last week. Iraq is a sinkhole of destruction, and if Americans could see it close up, the way we saw New Orleans in the immediate aftermath of Katrina, they would be stupefied.

Americans need to understand that Mr. Bush's invasion of Iraq was a strategic blunder of the highest magnitude. It has resulted in mind-boggling levels of bloodshed, chaos and misery in Iraq, and it certainly hasn't made the U.S. any safer.

We've had enough clownish debates on the Senate floor and elsewhere. We've had enough muscle-flexing in the White House and on Capitol Hill by guys who ran and hid when they were young and their country was at war. And it's time to stop using generals and their forces under fire in the field for cheap partisan political purposes.

The question that needs to be answered, honestly and urgently (and without regard to partisan politics), is how best to extricate overstretched American troops—some of them serving their third or fourth tours—from the flaming quicksand of an unwinnable war.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOSHUA MARC DAVIDSON

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate a young man from Greenwood Village, Colorado, Mr. Joshua Marc Jacobson, for earning a Congressional Award Gold Medal.

The Congressional Award program challenges talented young men and women to be active in their communities, develop leadership skills, and challenge themselves physically and to go on expeditions domestically or internationally.

Josh completed over 400 hours of community service with the most rewarding project being a food drive that he organized as the chapter president of Future Business Leaders of America. His personal development goals were achieved through part-time work with local businesses. Here he was able to develop skills in leadership that he will be taking with him as an intern for a Congressional Campaign this summer. Josh completed his physical fitness requirements by playing varsity tennis in high school, after years of hard work to achieve his goal.

Josh's commitment to his community and his desire to become a future leader is significant as he continues to grow this summer and in the years ahead.